

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

THE NEW YORKER

AT THE GALLERIES



In 2019, the mighty American sculptor **Martin Puryear** represented the U.S. at the Venice Biennale—and about time, too. In a career spanning nearly fifty years, the artist, who was born in Washington, D.C., in 1941, has mined the great narrative of American life and history for his elegant, intellectually astute, and distancing work. In his current show—six large pieces created in the past three years—at the Matthew Marks gallery, Puryear employs a variety of materials, ranging from twine to bronze, to explore emblematic shapes that bring to mind the Civil War, humanity’s destruction of the natural world, and the Black body. What unites these sculptures, other than the delicate and sturdy latticework in several of them, is Puryear’s interest in, and rendering of, loneliness. In the understated but dramatic “New Voortrekker” (pictured), from 2018, a wooden covered wagon rests on a sharp incline; there are no figures present in the vehicle, which evokes all that was left behind in order to forge ahead in the New World. —*Hilton Als*